

Hope

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Summary: Seifer and Fujin angstfest, sequel to 'Hurt' and second in a trilogy. I'd honestly meant for 'Hurt' to stand alone, but... well, here this is.

Hope

Hope _It was one of those mornings where you wake up and this is staring

> you in the face in your folder, and you wonder, 'What was I drinking last night?'
 - Guardian_

Hope

> _____

He supposed he should relax.

It was the normal 'man' thing to do, as natural and as expected as

> breathing. Women troubles? Go get drunk.

But Seifer Almasy was not a normal man. He did not need to drown his

> sorrows in vodka, whiskey or those awful multicoloured drinks with
 little umbrellas in. He was a knight, and he bore his pain proudly,

> whether it be the physical wound or the hurt of the soul.

So why was he in the darkened part of this bar, staring down morosely

> at the drink he'd just been brought?

It was a drink and he was a man, no fear involved. Seifer coolly swigged

> a large portion and curled his fingers around the glass. Hah,

take
 that, alcohol.

Of course, it was all Fujin's fault. If it wasn't for her, he wouldn't

> have to succumb to the brilliant promise of a few hours of
 forgetfulness. She was an open wound... if you poked at it, it didn't

> heal... if you let it be, all sorts of disgusting things got into it,
 like fluff. Seifer couldn't do anything and he was tired of letting

> things be. Might as well take some liquid courage and forget about
 bloody silver-haired women you saw all day long. Screw handling pain.

Before he knew it, that drink was gone, and he followed it up with

> another so that it wouldn't get lonely in his stomach. Seifer Almasy
 was not a friend of alcohol; the only time he'd ever really used it

> was as a child when Matron put it on his ever-grazed knees.

Or was that iodine? Aw, who gave a shit.

His mind got blissfully fuzzy after a while and he took his gloves off.

> Seifer cooled his callouses by gripping the cup hard, the ice
 refreshing to touch. This wasn't so bad after all. Why hadn't he tried

> it before? There was a mellow feeling running all through him and
 nothing seemed too bad any more.

One naked hand dug into his pocket and took out his wallet. Gently,

> carefully, Seifer extracted a slip of glossy card deep within the
 ancient leather and examined it. It was of a girl, looking unhappy

> and uncomfortable in SeeD cadet uniform, scowling for her ID photo.
 Kazeno, Fujin, fifth year Balamb cadet. Sweet sixteen, shaggy hair

> the colour of sun on rainclouds. It hung, carefully placed, over her
 right eye, recently lost. Fujin had probably never even seen this

> photo. Seifer had obtained it, by use of fair and foul means, through
 the office files. Gods knew why he wasted space in his bloody wallet

> for this dogeared, much-thumbed photo. It wasn't like he
 could bloody forget that face when he looked at it every morning.

It wasn't like anybody could forget it anyway.

Seifer drained the dregs of his drink and nodded brusquely to the waitress. Already knowing the sad pattern of a man out to get wasted,
 she discreetly provided him with another, and in turn he handed her

> the gil. Ah, yes, anything could be bought. Except love.

Not like love meant shit in this world. _Oh, yes, I'm little Miss Rinoa

> Heartilly and I love you sooo much, Seifer, but oh look, there's your
femmy rival Squall, I'll date him instead! Let's make a dinner date

> later so that I can give you the fragments of your heart back.

> Rinoa deserved that putrid lump of pus. He in turn deserved her,

> and Seifer prayed Rinoa's heart wouldn't be fickle so that Leonhart
 would be stuck with that bitch for the rest of his goddamn life.

No, there was no such thing as love for Seifer. Everything that he'd

> tried to love ended up wasted and decayed. It was good that Fujin
 didn't give a shit for him, she'd end up dead too... but not like... not

> like he loved her, or anythin'.

Not like he cared that way.

Not like he got this funny feeling in his toes and his palms got slick

> every time he was graced with her rare slow smile.

Seifer took another long swig at his drink, then slumped onto his hand,

> elbow at the table. And after all this - all the sorceresses - he
 thought it couldn't get any worse. And here he was, suddenly realizing

> he'd fallen so hard for his closest friend he was liable to break every
 bone in his body. An adolescent crush. A silly infatuation... love?

No. No. Not love. Couldn't be love.

He wiped his forehead and took another sip as he stared at the photo,

> read the face he knew so well. A sudden flash of memory took him back
 a week ago, in that heatwave, and she'd been wearing barely anything,

> and -

Seifer broke out in a slight hot flush at the memory and shoved the

> photo back in it's leaf. He savoured and hated that memory; savoured
 what he'd seen, hated what he'd known. Fuusama... too good a girl for

> him. Too good a girl for any man. Yeah. Otherworldly.

He finished his glass and took a brief look at the clock on the wall,

> with eyes that found it slightly hard to focus. Maybe that stuff had
 gotten him a little, a little, you know... that word... tipsy. Oh,

> well, it was good for him! Drunk was fun, made it hard to focus on that
 unreadable look in Kazeno's eyes his mind replayed over and over for him

> each goddamn breath.

Seifer happily drank into the night.

Morning. Two in the morning.

She was awake, fully awake, ready to pounce up on the medicine kit

> with Curagas swirling at her fingertips, ready to perform the role
she'd played so many times before. Seifer Almasy only went out

> this late to fight battles, and it was *late* now. A slight bit of worry

> tugged at her heart as Fujin imagined the gashes and perhaps
bulletholes decorating his body.

Fujin had dwelled on this for a few hours.

It was then he'd stumbled in, cursing quietly as he tripped over
various articles of furniture, reeking of alcohol. Fujin was quite
shocked. This was not the usual behaviour of Seifer Almasy in any

> situation. He'd always scorned the drunkards, the druggies... he had
graciously allowed the smokers, but those other two were fools.

Fujin turned on the lamplight and swung her legs out of bed, dressed

> in her usual attire of long-sleeved shirt and cotton shorts. She

 seized his arm and sat him down where she'd lay as he blinked at her
> owlishly.

"DRUNK," she accused, a slight note of hurt in her voice.

"Man, and here's you sounding like you care," Seifer said casually,

> pale jade eyes hard. "Isn't this a surprise?"

"CARE," she said simply, standing and folding her arms. Then she sighed;

> snapping couldn't be done well with one-word sentences. "Seifer, what
the hell were you thinking?"

"I'm suddenly not allowed to have a drink?" His voice was slurred, but

> it was cold and harsh. "Since when were you Matron?"

"I don't want you getting killed," she hissed.

"Like you'd care. Like you'd fuckin' care. What am I for you, Kazeno?" the whisper came back. "A rock, that's what I am. You just bloody

 cling to me because you've got nowhere else to go_."

"You're drunk and you're talking bullshit. Go to sleep." Don't let your
voice wobble, don't let him show how much what he's saying
hurts.

Suddenly he sprang up, eyes aflame, hands like vices around her

wrists.

> "But I'm not talkin' bullshit, am I, Fusama?" Seifer used the affectionate
term like a swearword now, slicing her to the core. "You know it's true.

> You don't *care*, do you? You're not even capable of love! You're..

> you're just ice!" Suddenly his voice was shaking, as was the rest of
him, staring down at her desperately. The forced chuckle that came from

> his throat was slightly hysterical as he let her go and slipped against
the wall, leaning against it. "Ice..."

Raijin made an indistinct noise in his sleep.

It was the way he looked at her, the way that he looked through her

> transparently that suddenly made the tears bubble up, breaking free and
washing over her, tears that had been extinct for years. It was a strange

> foreign feeling as the one alive eye wept, choked noises coming from
her throat as she desperately tried to quell them.

Not here. Not now.

You think I'm not capable of love, when love bound me to your banner,

> bound me to your cause, when sometimes it was the only thing that fed me?
You, Almasy, dare question MY love, the love that is sacred and beyond

> asking of? You? You, of all people, whom I once thought understood?

Even drunk, he knew he'd gone too far. Her tears broke him out of his

> reverie as he stared in horrified fascination, as one would stare at a
car crash or broken limb. He'd... he'd made Fujin cry...

"Aw... aww, shit, Fu." His voice was back to it's normal tone as he stood

> and walked over to her hesitantly. She backed away, falling onto the bed.

"I didn't mean it," he offered weakly. "I... didn't know what I was sayin',

> Fuchan..."

Fujin merely stared, tears tangling in her eyelashes and blurring her

> vision, rendering her weak as a newborn kitten. If he tried to kill her
now, she could not protest, but merely surrender to his actions.

Seifer's hoarse whisper was unreadable to her ears.

> "D'you hate me, Fujin?"

"Incapable of love," her voice rasped, hurt beyond belief or recognition.

He knelt at her side of the bed. "M'sorry."

"I'm sorry too." Fujin closed her one eye.

"I know you're not incapable of love."

She lay still.

The room was thick with silence and Seifer found it hard to concentrate.

> He was kinda dizzy and he almost couldn't make out her voice.

"I'm not like that." I'm just me, and my love is a secret thing,
> private and locked-up.

"I know that....! I just... hell, I don't know what I want to say or do

> or shit and now you hate me and I'm so tired, Fujin." His head

> was slumping on the bed, and Seifer rolled off miserably to one side.
 He was pathetic, worse than Squall and Zell rolled into one, and he

> deserved worse than to even breathe next to Fujin Kazeno.

Eventually she rolled off the bed and covered him with the blanket.

> "You're a stupid fuck, Seifer Almasy," she told him, not unkindly.

His voice was thick with tiredness. "I'kno." Seifer's eyelids drooped.

> "I'jus... wanna know... why you don' leave me..."

Fujin stood quietly, looking down at his form in the faint light of day.

> Then she looked away, out the window, closing her eye. Nothing to lose
 but her sanity now. "I... love you. Always have..."

She looked down at him for witness, holding her breath to see... pity?

> Disapproval?... approval?...

Face at peace, lips curved in a slight smile, golden bangs falling

> at his forehead.

Seifer was fast asleep.

Fujin didn't know whether to laugh or cry or scream his name in agony.

> So she merely stumbled towards the door and leant against it, breath
 not coming to her throat as her emotions exhausted her. Loving, hoping,

> decaying inside like this was slowly killing her. She didn't know whether
 she could take much more of it.

And suddenly, a gentle, large hand the colour of cinnamon petted her

> hair awkwardly. Raijin. Raijin was awake, Raijin, Raijin had

heard...

He held one finger to his lips. "D'you want my bed?" he whispered.

Fujin shook her head mutely.

The big man tiptoed over and grabbed her pants, handing them to her.

> "Maybe you should go on a walk, ya know? You can work it out in the mornin'."

His big brown eyes were kind, filled with sympathy for his poor Fujin.

> Oh, he'd known. He could read the albino like a book. "He din't mean
 anythin' he said. He wouldn't hurt you..."

If she was that kind of girl, she would have hugged him; but he was Raijin

> and he understood. Tugging on her pants, Fujin nodded at him and opened the
 door. The morning was quiet and grey in the passages of Balamb Hotel, and

> she folded her arms tightly at her ribs, hugging herself close as the
 door closed softly behind her.

It was times like this that made her wish that the T-Rexaur had aimed

> for her throat.

~FIN~
>

End
file.